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Contract Car Repair Facilities

July 28, 1980

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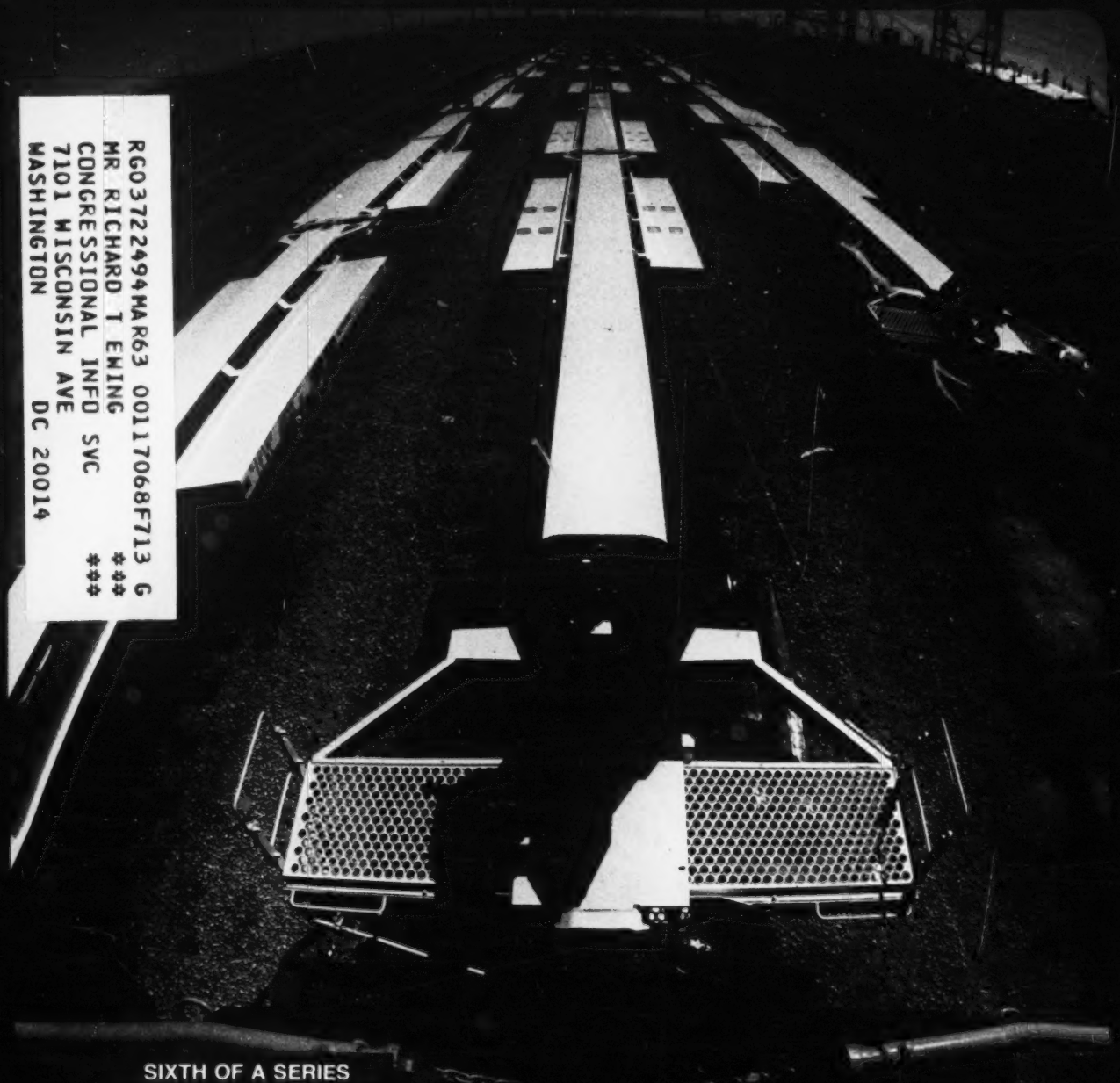

SIXTH OF A SERIES

Railroad technology

Intermodal: Evolution and revolution

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Inside

LUTHER S. MILLER

BY ANY OTHER NAME. . .

An astonishing change takes place when the dinner-table (or sundeck or barroom) conversation turns to railroads. People who otherwise behave like perfectly sensible and well informed human beings suddenly get a dangerous gleam in their eyes and begin to babble.

This is because everyone is an expert on railroads. The requirement for being an expert is any one of the following: (1) The air conditioning broke down on your commuter car last night; (2) an elderly aunt had a bad trip on the *Metroliner* last week; (3) an acquaintance recently rode the *Chopin Express* from Warsaw to Vienna and had a wonderful time. Anyone who has experienced all of the above in a 12-month period is in the master class and is qualified to write to his congressman and demand to know why we can't have fine trains like they have in Europe.

It is an innocent enough pastime, this all-American game of deriding the railroads, and it does no great harm to anyone as long as it remains an indoor sport.

But when the "expert" is a respectable journalist with space to fill in respectable papers, and when he tries to peddle his snake oil remedy for "our deteriorating railroads" in a package of prose so redolent of red herrings that it hardly smells like snake oil any more—that's a different matter.

Such an expert is Henry Fairlie, who writes a widely admired weekly column that is published in *The Washington Post* and syndicated to other papers. A recent Fairlie column, passionately advocating the nationalization of American railroads, appeared under the headline, "Sick U.S. Railroads Need European Remedy."

. . .IT'S STILL SNAKE OIL

"The story of the neglect and continuing decline of American railroads," wrote Fairlie, "is a subject for outrage."

Now had Fairlie been outraged by the neglect and decline not of "American railroads" but of the small part of their business that is represented by passenger trains, he might have had a point. The passenger train *has* been neglected, first by the traveling public and then by the railroads, and it has declined.

But while the malady Fairlie was diagnosing clearly had to do only with passenger trains (he was distraught, for example, by the discovery that only two Amtrak trains a day now pass through Cheyenne, Wyo.), he would smear his nationalization nostrum over the entire system.

If Fairlie was aware that our passenger trains have already been nationalized and that the experiment has not been a howling success, he avoided mentioning the fact. If he knew that for every 100 "neglected" passenger trains that ply the rails, several thousand freight trains are efficiently and profitably going about their business, and paying taxes rather than consuming them, he did not mention it.

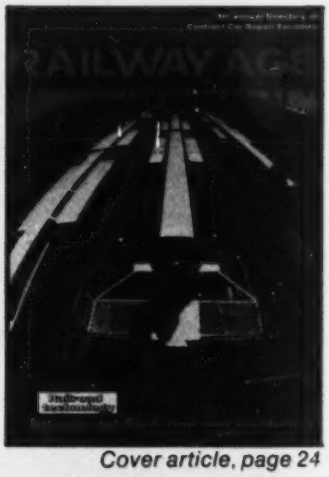
With one misty eye on the nearly deserted Cheyenne station, and a happier one on the bustling stations of Europe, he reached, not surprisingly, a cockeyed conclusion: "The case for restoring and reinvigorating the railroads—bringing them openly into public ownership and supporting them openly with adequate subsidies—has never been stronger than it is today."

The fact that responsible reporters are capable of writing such nonsense, and that responsible papers will print it, is a measure of the distance we still have to go before we get the railroad story across to the public, and to those who seek to inform that public.

RAILWAY AGE

July 28, 1980

FEATURES



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24 Railroad technology, Part VI
Intermodal: Evolution—and revolution
At least 10 new intermodal railcars are either on the road or on the drawing board. So far, Santa Fe's Ten-Pack is the most thoroughly tested and the most promising. RoadRailer, the most revolutionary, starts revenue tests in August.

32 KCLX 7086 passes its 480,000-mile checkup
Representatives of the carbuilder and most component suppliers were on hand for the annual teardown and inspection of the Kansas City Power & Light unit train coal car—and most of them were happy with the results.

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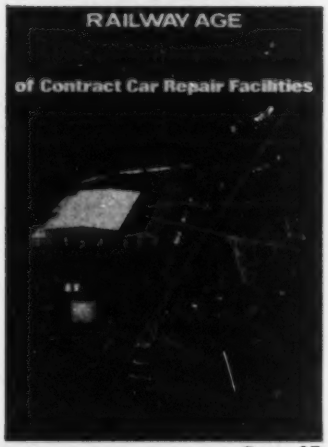
78 The export coal boom: How long? How strong?
The U.S. coal industry expects export shipments to increase 21% this year, to 55 million tons; about half of the increase will be steam coal. But railroads want long-term commitments before they invest heavily in expanded facilities.

83 C&NW: Flying high as rival roads founder
Bad news for the Milwaukee Road and the Rock Island has proved to be good news for the Chicago & North Western, which, says President James R. Wolfe, is turning itself into "one hell of a strong midwestern railroad."



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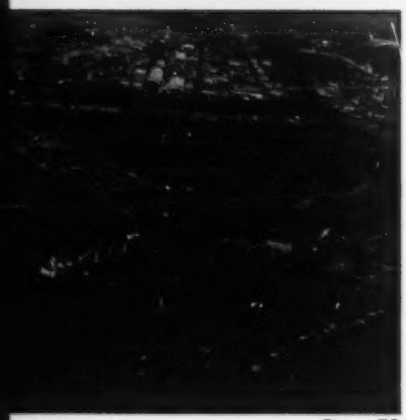

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COVER: Fish-eye lens view of Santa Fe's Ten-Pack intermodal cars was taken by Santa Fe system photographer Dale R. Thompson.

Market

CARLOADINGS

Loadings of revenue freight in the week ended July 5 totaled 345,206 cars, according to the Association of American Railroads. This was a decrease of 59,894 cars, or 14.8%, compared with the corresponding week last year. Ton-miles generated by carloadings in the week ended July 5 are estimated at 14.4 billion, a decrease of 7.4% below the corresponding week of 1979. Both weeks included the Independence Day Holiday and the beginning of the coal miners' holiday.

REVENUE FREIGHT CARLOADINGS

Commodity	July 5 week	June 28 week
Grain	30,732	30,291
Farm products	3,978	4,755
Metallic ores	38,658	33,939
Coal	69,270	117,333
Crushed stone, gravel & sand	12,293	14,986
Nonmetallic minerals	14,544	16,869
Grain mill products	13,878	17,215
Food and kindred products	14,964	18,689
Primary forest products	15,237	20,362
Lumber & wood products (except furniture)	6,700	9,233
Pulp, paper & allied products	17,743	21,897
Chemicals & allied products	21,257	24,624
Petroleum products	4,463	5,420
Stone, clay & glass products	13,058	14,941
Coke	3,561	4,162
Metals & products	11,853	15,035
Motor vehicles & equipment	12,799	15,199
Waste & scrap materials	7,902	10,243
Forwarder & shipping assn. traffic	8,780	10,993
All other carloads	33,374	43,185
LCL traffic	162	200
Total cars loaded	**345,206**	**449,471**
Cumulative total, 27 weeks	1980 **11,828,156**	1979 **12,257,268**
Estimated revenue ton-miles (billions), 27 weeks	**477.6**	**462.0**

PIGGYBACK LOADINGS

U.S. piggyback loadings for the week ended June 28 totaled 32,745 cars (19.7% below the corresponding 1979 week) and 60,983 trailers or containers (down 15.9% from 1979). Cumulative volume for the first 26 weeks of 1980 is 849,503 (down 9.1% from 1979) and 1,545,166 trailers or containers (down 6.4% from 1979).

CANADIAN CARLOADINGS

Canadian railway revenue freight loaded in the seven-day period ended June 7 totaled 5.7 million tons (up 12.5% from 1979). Cars loaded totaled 80,497 (up 4.8% from 1979). Cumulative loadings for 1980 were up to 113.5 million tons (up 7.1% from 1979).

● *CP Rail.*—Ordered 500 100-ton, 4,550-cubic-foot-capacity covered hopper cars from Hawker Siddeley Canada Limited at a cost of approximately $27 million. The cars, scheduled for delivery between December 1980 and February 1981, will be used primarily for the transport of potash. The order will bring CP Rail's covered hopper car fleet to more than 6,900 cars.

● *Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority.*—General Railway Signal is the apparent low bidder on a $6.3-million extension of the MARTA system. The bid covers installation of automatic train control on a three-station extension of the north-south line. GRS, MARTA's prime signaling contractor, was originally awarded a $28.8-million contract for signaling the first phase of the system in 1976.

● *Southern.*—Awarded a $3.8-million contract to GTE Lenkurt for engineering, supplying, and installing microwave radio equipment and antenna systems at 49 sites in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. The contract is the second phase of an ongoing project to modernize the microwave network. Phase one, a $1.4-million contract for 23 sites in Georgia and South Carolina, was completed by GTE Lenkurt in December 1979.

● *Freight cars and locomotives.*—The following report has been received from the AAR and the ARCI:

DELIVERED

	May 1980	May 1979	April 1980	Five months 1980	Five months 1979
Built new by carbuilders	7,484	7,281	7,546	38,039	33,838
Built new in RR shops	589	423	347	2,398	2,156
Built new—total	8,073	7,704	7,893	40,437	35,994
Rebuilt	188	103	181	795	322
TOTAL DELIVERED	**8,261**	**7,807**	**8,074**	**41,232**	**36,316**
Locomotives (new and rebuilt)	167	160	149	855	694

ORDERED

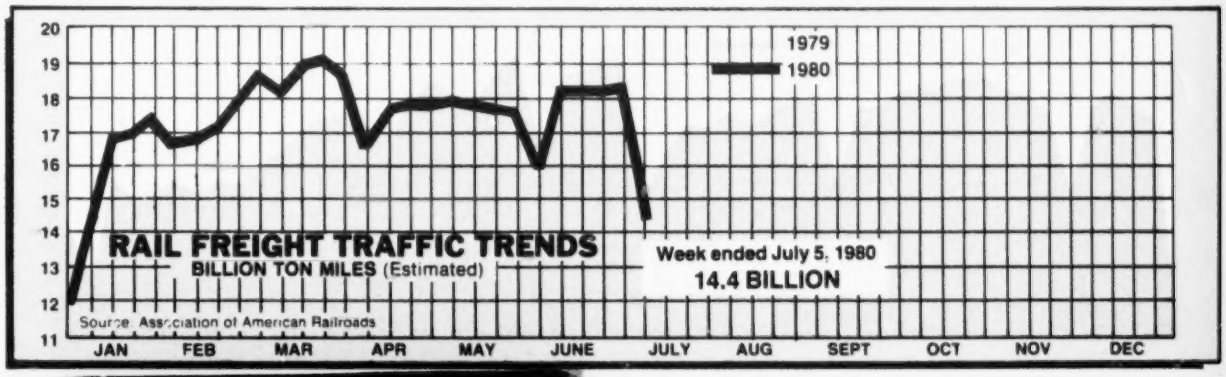
To be built new by carbuilders	3,882	13,288	2,851	19,264	64,629
To be built new in RR shops	1,862	413	2,650	4,512	913
To be built new—total	5,744	13,701	5,501	23,776	65,542
To be rebuilt	0	87	36	869	278
TOTAL ORDERED	**5,744**	**13,788**	**5,537**	**24,645**	**65,820**

ON ORDER AND UNDELIVERED

	June 1 1980	June 1 1979	May 1 1980	Average backlog 1980	Average backlog 1979
To be built new by carbuilders	78,911	120,243	84,947	98,708	108,445
To be built new in RR shops	8,366	5,068	7,093	5,767	5,725
To be built new—total	87,277	125,311	91,940	104,475	114,170
To be rebuilt	174	43	362*	572	133
TOTAL ON ORDER	**87,451****	**125,354**	**92,302***	**105,047**	**114,303**
Locomotives (new and rebuilt)	953	1,087	1,083	1,146	1,180

* Revised Figures

** Due to revisions and cancellations of some orders, the backlog has been reduced by 2,334 cars.



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Cleveland: Renovating the rail transit system

August 11, 1980

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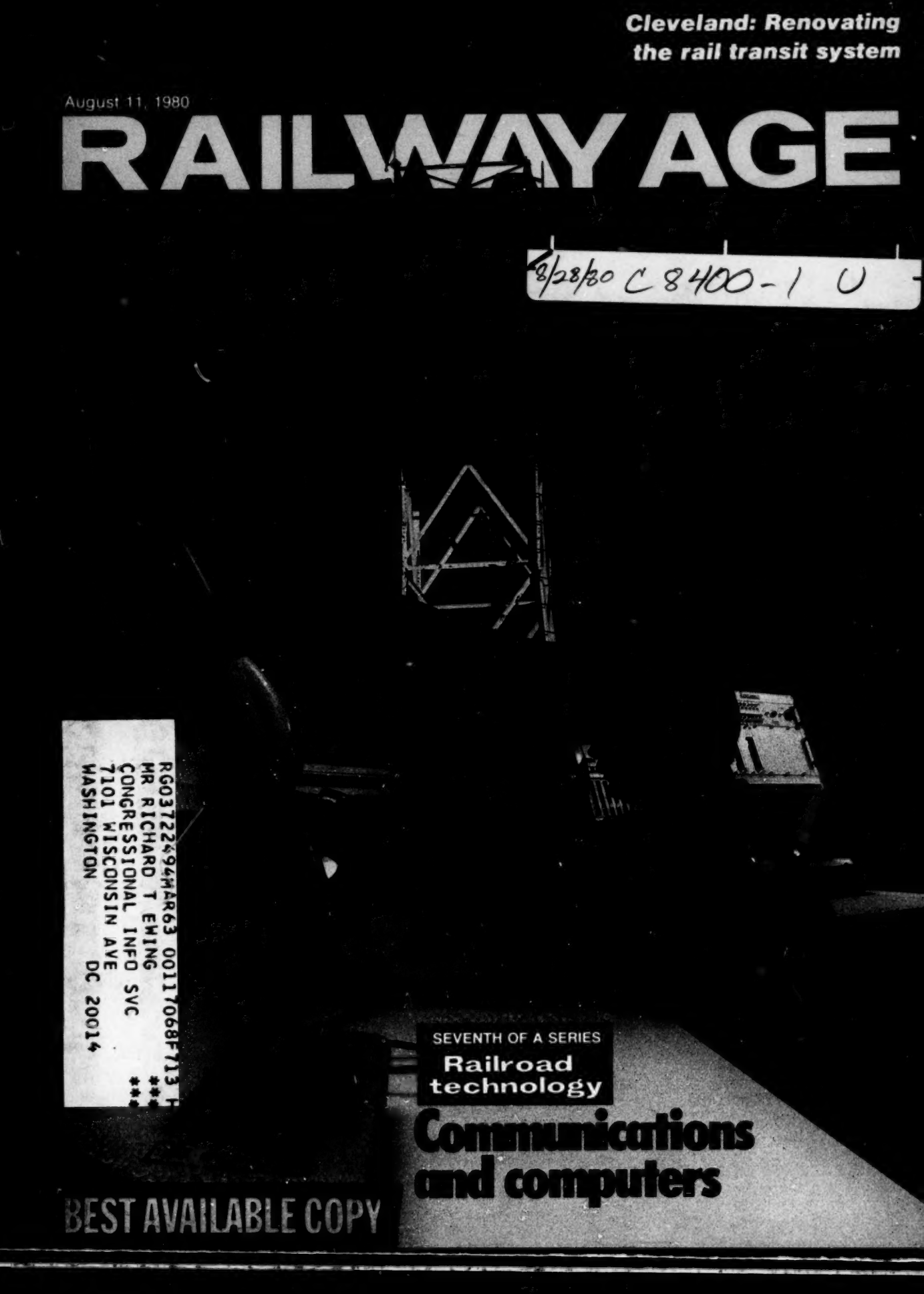

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Inside

LUTHER S. MILLER

COMMUNICATING

About 10 years ago the Association of American Railroads published a list of 112 key dates in American railroading, and among them were these:

1851, September 22—The first recorded use of telegraph for train dispatching took place at Turner (now Harriman), N.Y.

1865—The block signal system, through telegraphic communication, was introduced by Ashbel Welch.

1877, May 21—Tests at Altoona, Pa., marked the first use of telephone communication for railroad purposes.

1914—First tests were begun looking toward the use of radio in railroad communications.

1937, March—A two-way train telephone communication system was inaugurated between Albion, Pa., and North Bessemer Yard, Pittsburgh.

1945, May 17—The Federal Communications Commission allocated radio channels for exclusive railroad use, and the first construction permit was granted on Feb. 27, 1946.

1956, March—The first large-scale electronic data processing computer was introduced into railroad operations, after years of testing and experimentation with varied types of automatic office equipment. Stockholder dividend checks were processed first, and on March 12, 1957, company payroll checks were printed.

1962, October 26—Railroad train information was first transmitted instantaneously from St. Louis, Mo., to Dallas, Tex., via Telstar. Wallace Coleman thus became the first railroader to use a satellite communication system.

1967, October—Railroads announced plans for an automatic car identification (aci) system to make possible prompt location of freight cars. A 1970 start-up was proposed in conjunction with TeleRail Automated Information Network (TRAIN), with the central computer to be located at the Association of American Railroads' headquarters in Washington.

Since the AAR developed that list, a whole new communications terminologoy has been developing. "Fibre optics" and "solar power" have entered the railroad lexicon. And since EDP first went to work on the railroads a mere quarter of a century ago, computer technology has leaped forward at a dazzling pace. Southern Pacific's "Pete" Germany recently observed that his pocket calculator can do all of the computations of which SP's first big computer, the IBM 1400, was capable.

Just how far the railroads have come in communications—and where they're headed—is the subject of Associate Editor John Armstrong's cover story in this issue (p. 16).

WRITING FOR "REAL RAILROADERS"

John Armstrong is a man of many parts, as *The Washington Post Magazine* recently pointed out. The July 27 edition of that magazine, in an article about hobbyists of note, published a color photograph of Armstrong taken in his Silver Spring, Md., basement—a room that *The Post* called "the model train buff's wonderland." After describing Armstrong's 1,100-foot, 200-car model railroad, *The Post* went on to say: "Unlike most hobbyists, Armstrong has managed to parlay his play into a living. After some 25 years as a mechanical engineer, he now serves as the Washington editor of Railway Age magazine, a journal for real railroaders." It is for real railroaders that John wrote this issue's piece on communications, though our guess is that any railroader, main-line or model, will find it rewarding reading.